

President Buhari set a positive cooperative tone with the international community. However, there is no question that we must continue our robust humanitarian response.

Finally, we must get smart about our security assistance. Agreeing to sell planes with more sophisticated targeting systems that will not be on the ground for 2 more years will not fix what is broken with respect to the Nigerian military's response in the north. Right now—today—we and our international partners should redouble our efforts to work with the Nigerians to develop a list of short-term interventions and a long-term plan to address issues related to military professionalism, accountability, improved command and control, more effective communication between and within services, strategic planning, logistics, and auditing. The strategic governance initiative is a step in the right direction, but we must take action that will translate into results in the field as quickly as possible.

The situation in Nigeria is urgent. Few Americans are aware of the importance of Nigeria to the United States or the degree of suffering in northeastern Nigeria, but those of us who are policymakers cannot afford to drop the ball on our support of Nigeria's fight against Boko Haram or for those suffering in the Lake Chad basin. I recognize that it seems to some people that we are being called on to do more now internationally than ever. But we can do this. We are the Nation that conceived the Marshall Plan, worked with allies to execute the Berlin Airlift, and more recently, developed and implemented PEPFAR. We are up to the task. And we are not alone. Where America leads, our partners will follow. And I strongly encourage them to do so. Failure to redouble our efforts in these areas could mean that ISIS will gain a foothold in West Africa for a generation.

I thank my colleagues.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL FRANCIS

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the dedicated public service of Paul Francis, who will soon retire as managing director for acquisition and sourcing management with the Government Accountability Office, GAO, a position he has held since 2009. For more than 42 years, Paul has helped the U.S. Congress analyze the \$2 trillion in the ships, planes, tactical vehicles, satellites, and scores of other systems and related services that the Department of Defense, DOD, has procured to make our Nation safe. In so doing, Paul has obtained the respect of the Members of this body and the deep affection of his colleagues, who for decades have hewed to his fine example of public service.

An important congressional oversight tool that Paul helped develop at GAO almost 15 years ago is its annual "Quick Look" assessment of the Pen-

tagon's procurement of its most expensive, most complicated weapon systems. In these reports and in the hundreds of individual reports that GAO has released on major defense acquisition programs, Paul's teams first identified, and railed—occasionally like a lone voice in the wilderness—against the proliferation of "concurrent development" throughout the Pentagon's portfolio of major procurement programs. As Paul and his team observed, this acquisition strategy, which features an excessive overlap between development and production, has exposed the DOD's largest weapons procurement efforts to an undue, high risk of discoveries late in production, often requiring costly redesign, production cut-ins and retrofits—driving up the costs of these programs exponentially, especially those executed carelessly under cost-plus contracts. These observations have been vital to Congress's attempts to reform, among other programs, the joint strike fighter and the aerial refueling tanker programs and provided Congress with a valuable framework for analyzing and overseeing how the DOD spends hundreds of billions of taxpayers' dollars each year.

Since first becoming a member of the Senior Executive Service in 2002, Paul has testified before Congress more than 20 times—sounding the alarm on everything from unmanned aerial vehicles, the Army's Future Combat System, shipbuilding and missile defense programs, and broader issues of acquisition best practices and reform. For more than a decade, I have relied greatly on his clear analysis and recommendations related to the Ford-class aircraft carrier and littoral combat ship programs.

In addition, Paul has been an excellent witness, who counterbalances the Pentagon's complicated, technical, and bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo, which I sometimes think the DOD purposefully uses to resist being understood by a layperson, with cogent, plainspoken, evenhanded, but nuanced assessments. Time and again, Paul has thoughtfully illustrated the practices that should be followed to ensure success, as well as how poorly aligned bureaucratic incentives lead to failure despite well-intentioned individuals. Also noting that all individuals participating in the defense acquisition process "see their needs as rational and aligned with the national interest, collectively" and that "these needs create incentives for pushing programs and encouraging undue optimism, parochialism, and other compromises of good judgment," Paul has reminded us that the problems we see in the defense acquisition process are not the fault of any one actor—they are the collective responsibility of all of us.

Paul epitomizes what Congress and the American public value about the Government Accountability Office—the honest broker. In believing that oversight of programs funded by taxpayer dollars represents a sacred trust

and in embracing this responsibility aggressively with joy, Paul has been a tireless, effective advocate for both the American taxpayer and the men and women in service to the government's many and varied missions. He has inspired his teams with this notion of resource stewardship, that American taxpayers should get what they have paid for and American warfighters should get the capabilities they need to defend this great Nation.

Paul has received numerous GAO awards during his career, including the Comptroller General's Award and the John Henry Luke Mentoring Award. Leading by example at GAO, he models his own motto, which is "Be right. Communicate well. Don't leave people in body bags."

Throughout his remarkable career with GAO, Paul has been supported by a wonderful family, including his wife, Vicky, and two daughters, Sheri and Katie—all of whom are engaged in public service in various ways. We wish Paul a fond farewell and thank him for his distinguished service to Congress and the American public. Thank you.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING BENNETT LUMBER PRODUCTS, INC.

• Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, Idaho's small businesses and the entrepreneurs behind them are known for their perseverance and get-it-done mentality. They have a seemingly innate understanding of the importance of delivering the highest quality products and services. Successful small businesses are also known for their commitment to getting the job done right. These qualities are on display in this month's Small Business of the Month. Located in north Idaho's rich timber country, this month's honoree is well known in my home State for its strong commitment to its local community and sustainable forestry. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, I am pleased to recognize Bennett Lumber Products, Inc., as the Senate Small Business of the Month for February 2017.

Led by a legendary lumberman, Mr. Frank Bennett, Bennett Lumber Products, Inc., is a family-owned and operated company headquartered in Princeton, ID. The company has two highly efficient mills, one in Princeton, ID, and the other in Clarkston, WA. Bennett Lumber also owns and sustainably manages approximately 70,000 acres of forest lands throughout the Northwest. The Idaho location, originally known as Boones' Mill, was purchased by Bennett Lumber in the early 1950s. The company invested in upgrading the old mill's equipment and modernized its processes in order to mill smaller dimension logs with a largely automated milling process. Always at the forefront of innovation in the lumber industry, Bennett Lumber implemented